THORP, FREEMAN

DRAWER 19A

Artist- T.

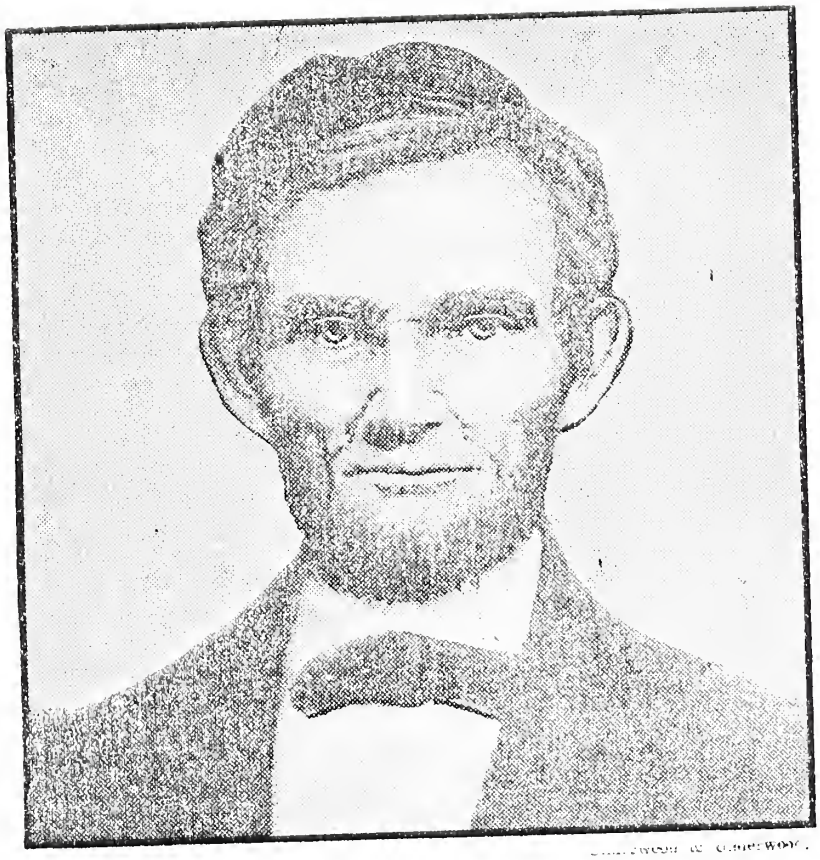
Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

Freeman Thorp

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



Portrait study of Abraham Lincoln, made by Freeman Thorp. This is believed to be one of the best likenesses of Lincoln

FREEMAN THORP (1844-1922)

The portrait by Freeman Thorp was made from sketches drawn from life. Its first inspiration came when Mr. Thorp, as a boy, made a sketch of Lincoln at Geneva, Ohio, when the President-elect was on his way to Washington for the inauguration. Later, when Lincoln made his memorable address at Gettysburg, young Thorp made another sketch of the President. As the years passed he became a portrait painter of national reputation. He made portraits of Presidents Grant, Garfield, Cleveland and McKinley, but he never forgot the pencil sketches of Lincoln.[6] On April 5, 1920, a Senate Resolution authorized $2000 for a portrait of Lincoln for the Senate wing of the Capitol. Mr.Thorp's portrait, made from his original sketches, won the award and Frank B. Brandigee, then Chairman, Committee on Library, signed the voucher for its purchase on April 21, 1920.[7]

Daily
Cap News, May 3-1920

LINCOLN WITH A SMILE.

SHOWN IN PAINTING BY FREEMAN THORP.

Congress has recently purchased and had placed in the senate corridor of the capitol building a new painting of Abraham Lincoln. The picture is the work of Freeman Thorp, the only painter, so far as known, who ever sketched Abraham Lincoln from life. The only other painting of Lincoln of note was done by Healy from photographs and belongs to Robert T. Lincoln, the son of the martyred president, who now lives in Washington.

The Thorp likeness of Mr. Lincoln will doubtless occasion no little comment, not

THORP'S SMILING LINCOLN.
[Copyright, by Freeman Thorp.]

only among artists but among the public generally, for the reason that it presents the civil war president in a manner wholly different from any other known picture of him, whether photograph or otherwise. Nevertheless, it has been pronounced an excellent likeness of the emancipator by his son and by others who saw Lincoln in life, including Gen. Nelson A. Miles, Gen. Isaac Sherwood of Ohio, John Joy Edson of Washington.

The outstanding difference between the Thorp and other pictures of Lincoln lies in the fact that Mr. Thorp, who is now 75 years of age, has imbued his subject with good nature and animation, in contrast to the careworn, heavily burdened likenesses in the known photographs.

Mr. Thorp was commissioned by congress to study all the known pictures and the life of Lincoln forty-eight years ago. It happened that after Mr. Lincoln's election and before his inauguration Mrs. Lincoln made a trip to New York. On her return journey the good people of Geneva, O., Mr. Thorp's home town, turned out and greeted her with a salute of cannon. On his journey to Washington to be inaugurated, Mr. Lincoln returned the courtesy by delivering from his car a back platform speech, and it was then that Mr. Thorp sketched him, the painter standing on the ground studying the speaker.

Later Mr. Thorp entered the 2d Ohio cavalry and was given a furlough from Louisville and enabled to sketch Mr. Lincoln again at the time of the Gettysburg address. So far as is known these are the only sketches made of Mr. Lincoln from life which remain.

Mr. Thorp was given a small studio on the roof of the capitol and has worked on his picture during all these years, stopping only to paint pictures of many noted men in various parts of the country, including all the presidents. He was the floor leader of the republicans in the Ohio legislature which sent James A. Garfield to the senate, and he numbered among his personal friends John Sherman, John A. Logan and Charles Sumner.

All the artists who were his contemporaries in the '70s are now dead, whereas Mr. Thorp is as vigorous and active as a man of 50. He has a home in the lake country of the northwest, which he purchased a number of years ago when the district was something of a wilderness, and has tendered it to the president for a summer home this year.

LEROY T. VERNON.

Washington, D. C., April 27.

THE BURLINGTON HAW

WORKS 48 YEARS ON PORTRAIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Col. Freeman Thorpe and his portrait.

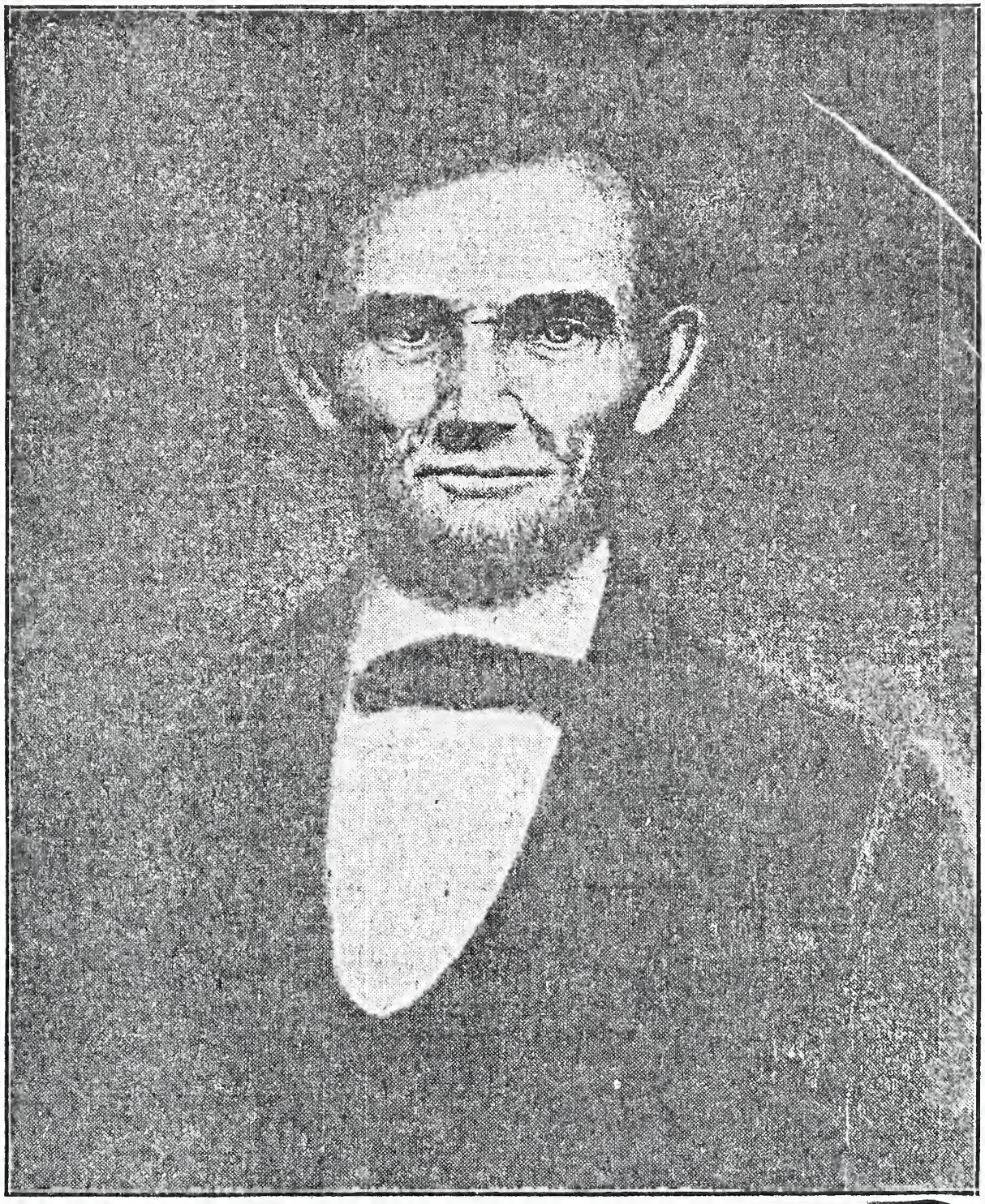
For 48 years Col. Freeman Thorpe has been working on a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. It is completed now and has been hung in the senate wing of the capital after being unanimously accepted by the senate.

5-12-1920-

J WRIGHT

FRESNO MORNING REPUBLICAN, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1921.

THE THORP "LINCOLN"



A hitherto unknown portrait of Abraham Lincoln was brought to light in Washington last year, and is of special interest to all lovers of history and of Great Americans. The artist is Mr. Freeman Thorp.

Thorp's portrait of Lincoln is the only portrait of Abraham Lincoln drawn entirely from life. There is no photograph or painting that is like it in position, outline or expression. Mr. Thorp, as a boy, had a remarkable talent for catching an exact likeness in a pencil sketch. When Lincoln stopped at the small town of Geneva, Ohio, on his way to Washington to be inaugurated, young Thorp studied and sketched him very carefully as he looked at the age of fifty-two. He later made another sketch of President Lincoln at Gettysburg, at the time of his memorable address .

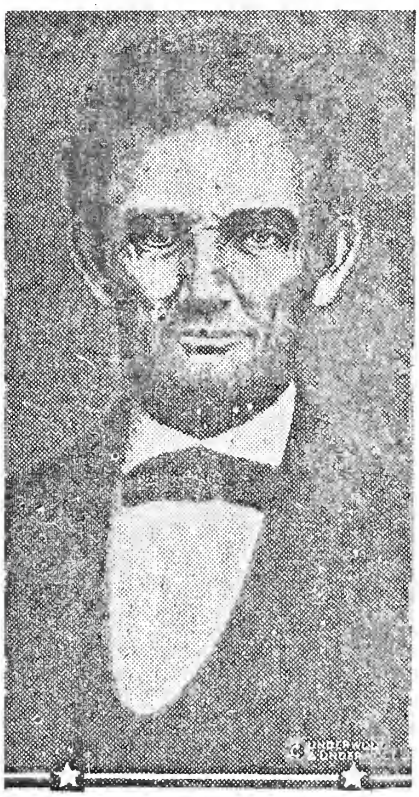
Years later, Thorp, an artist of distinguished reputation, and painter of four presidents, studied the existing pictures of Lincoln. Finding none so satisfactory as the penciled sketches made years ago, he, with these and his vivid memory of Lincoln, painted his unique and remarkable portrait of the Great Emancipator.

Thorp, Freeman

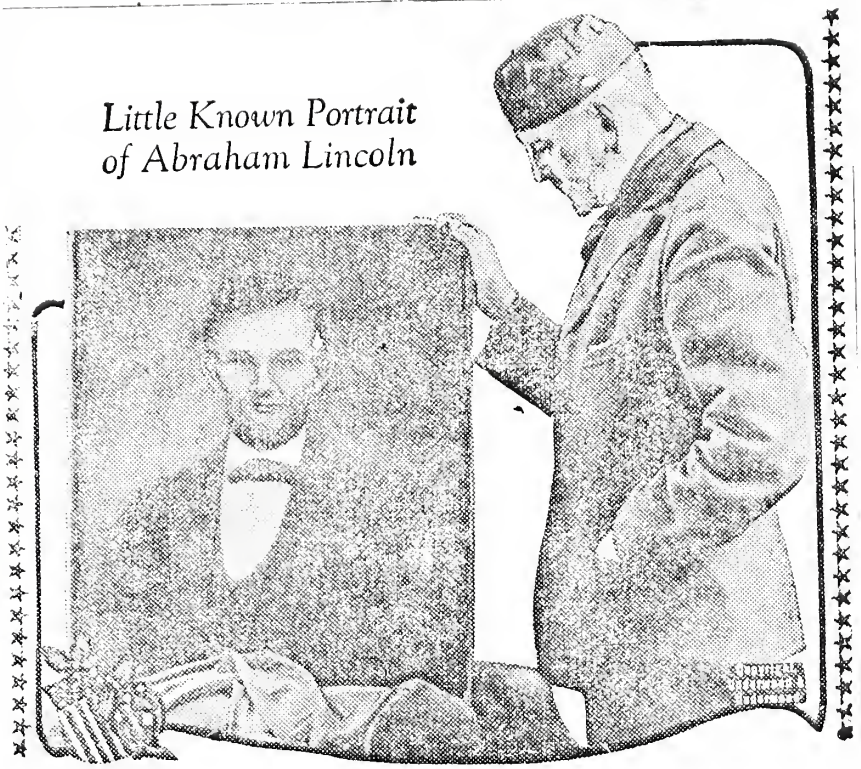
B. N.

Highland Democrat Feb 16/1934

Only Life Portrait of Lincoln



Portrait by Freeman Thorp, the only known portrait of Abraham Lincoln drawn entirely from life. The artist made his first pencil sketches of the Emancipator when he stopped in Geneva, O., on his way to Washington to be inaugurated. There is no photograph or painting that is like it in position, outline or expression.



Freeman Thorpe Exhibiting His Portrait of Lincoln.

Lincoln Portrait Drawn From Life

In a Way, Most Interesting of All Pictures of the Great President.

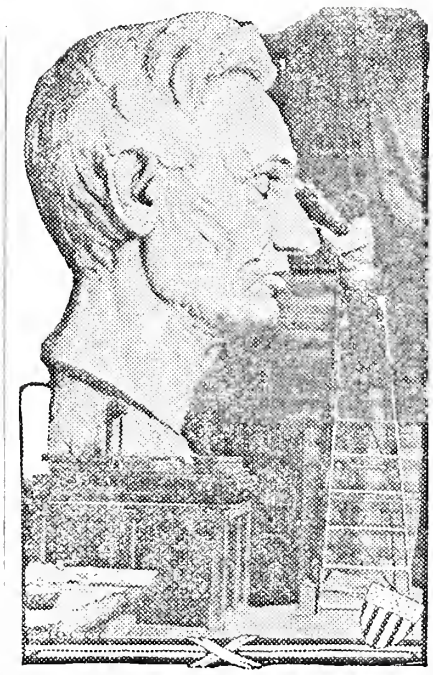
Freeman Thorpe, in an article published in Leslie's gave a deeply interesting account of how he made two life sketches of the martyred President, one of them being at Gettysburg while Lincoln was waiting to deliver his famous speech.

Mr. Thorpe wrote:

I was at home in Geneva, Ohio, when I heard that a train which was coming that afternoon from the east had on board Mrs. Lincoln, wife of the newly elected President. I hustled about and stirred up the militia company of the town, and when the train pulled in we had the cannon and were firing a salute in honor of the future occupant of the White House.

Then I was introduced to Mrs. Lincoln as the boy who had caused the salute. She was pleased, and treated me very graciously. Some weeks after that I wrote to President Lincoln and asked him to stop his inaugural train at Geneva, so I could make a sketch of him.

To my delight, Lincoln replied, agreeing to my request. I let it be known in Geneva that President Lincoln would honor the town by stopping there a few minutes, on his way to take office, and from sunrise until the train arrived every bell in Geneva kept up a continual ringing. People heard the noise away out in the country, and came in to learn what it was all about.



George G. Barnard, well-known sculptor, is here shown at his New York studio putting the finishing touches to the first of four 15-foot heads of Abraham Lincoln which are to be placed along the Lincoln highway, in four states.

When the train pulled in I was the first to clamber onto the platform of the President's car. There stood Lincoln ready to clasp my hand. Then I took my position on the next platform, and began my sketch, while the crowd pushed up to shake his hand. Of course that sketch was rough, but I got the likeness.

Then came the war. I enlisted and served in the Second Ohio cavalry, fighting in the Shenandoah valley. My health broke down and I was sent on detached duty to Jeffersonville, Ind., to recuperate. When I regained my health, I went on to Washington to rejoin my regiment. That was just before the first anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg. With my precious Geneva sketch of Lincoln, I went to the War department and asked for a furlough to go to Gettysburg and make another sketch of the President, for it had been announced that Mr. Lincoln would speak on that occasion.

I got the furlough and rode on the same train with the President, securing an audience. I showed him my finshed drawing, made from the Geneva "shorthand" sketch, and he complimented it.

When we arrived at Gettysburg, we found a great crowd there, interested in the scenes of the battlefield, rather than in the program of speeches. There were many open graves and battle victims were being buried.

Only a comparatively small number of people gathered about the stand to hear the speeches. I stood within 15 feet of Mr. Lincoln, as he sat on the platform. There I made another sketch. There is a wonderful difference in its expression from that of the Geneva sketch! The lines are deeper; the countenance more grave.

We listened two hours to the oration of Edward Everett, then the President stepped forward, a sheet of paper in his left hand. There he stood, his left foot advanced ahead of his right, and began to speak, gesticulating somewhat with both long arms. The crowd settled down to hear an hour's address, but it was all over in less than three minutes and the President sat down. There was no applause. The audience was astonished. Three minutes, when they had expected an hour! The meeting silently broke up.

In 1871 I went to Washington with my two Lincoln sketches. They were the only known sketches from life of the martyr President, and that fact interested the senators.

They built a studio for me on the capitol roof, over the senate wing, and I occupied it for 20 years. I was twenty-seven years old when given that studio, but not until last year did I finish my portrait of Lincoln. The library committee of the senate recommended its purchase, and the senate unanimously voted $2,000 for it.

Few but Have Kindly Feeling for Lincoln

"You (the South) have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it," said Lincoln in his first inaugural. This is the Lincoln who appeals to the conservatives, the Lincoln who saved the Union, says a writer in the Boston Globe.

They quote him on emancipation: "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save the Union by freeing all the slaves, I would do it. . . . Whatever I do about slavery and the colored

race, I do because I believe it helps save the Union."

However much he hated slavery, Lincoln saw the Union as his first job, and even the stodgiest tory of today can respect him on this count.

But the nonconservative (from the lightest pink to the deepest red) remembers Lincoln's remark on first seeing a slave market. "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I'm going to hit it hard."

During the spring of 1919, one of the reddest magazines in America flaunted a full-page face of the Emancipator on its cover and in its editorial section justified its course with examples from the life of Lincoln.

Even Lenin, in one of his "Letters to American Workingmen," commented on the emancipation of the slaves and paid tribute to the President who accomplished it.

The South always felt that had Lincoln lived it would have been spared the major horrors of reconstruction.

Presidential Victory Came as Birthday Gift

Almost in the nature of a birthday gift came the news to Abraham Lincoln that he had been elected President of the United States. The electoral college met and voted and on February 8 congress assembled in joint convention.

At this convention the vice president announced he had the returns from the states of Tennessee and Louisiana, but in obedience to the existing laws, he held it to be his duty not to present them to the convention. Only the returns from the loyal states, including West Virginia, were counted. The result showed 212 electoral votes for Lincoln and 21 for McClellan.

On the very day of the President's birthday, announcement came to Washington that the cotton ships Sherman had sent from Savannah had put into New York and Newport, R. I. The dispatches were featured in the newspapers announcing the arrival of the vessels and commenting with favor on the prospects of getting cargoes of cotton from the newly opened ports of the South.

If there were any thoughts of death on his mind on his last birthday, however, it is more than likely that they were due to a conscientiousness of having labored under too terrific a strain for any man to survive, especially with four years more of vexatious problems and unceasing labor ahead.

F.A.W.: I thought you would want to see this first hand. M.M.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

31 January 1948.

Dr. Lewis Warren,
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Dr. Warren:

I have been advised that the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company is interested in purchasing authentic Lincolnia and I am writing you, therefore, concerning an original pencil sketch of Lincoln made at Gettysburg.

The sketch was made by Colonel Freeman Thorp who commanded an Ohio regiment during the Civil War and was present at the dedicatory ceremonies at Gettysburg. The sketch was made at that time and was subsequently used as a model for several paintings of the martyred President, one of which hangs in the front lobby of the United States Senate.

Congress recognized Colonel Thorp as an outstanding artist back in the '70s when it arranged for a small studio for his use on the roof of the Capitol, during which time he painted a portrait of Mr. Garfield.

When I came to Washington more than thirty years ago Colonel Thorp was a constituent and frequently visited my office. He sank considerable sums of money in the development of a cut-over tract of land in Northern Crow Wing County, Minnesota and upon his death left little or nothing to two grown daughters, one of whom, Mrs. Glen Benson, lives at Backus, Minnesota. Mrs. Benson is now 67 years of age and is in necessitous circumstances.

The sketch of Lincoln made at Gettysburg and above referred to is now on loan to the Lincoln Museum, in Washington, D. C., labeled in the name of Miss Anne Thorp.

It occurred to me that your company might be interested in acquiring the sketch of Lincoln, hence this letter.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Harold Knutson

HK:pj

February 2, 1948

The Honorable Harold Knutson
Committee on Ways and Means
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

We regret to inform you that Dr. Warren is at present on a two months speaking itinerary on the Pacific coast.

I am forwarding your letter to him and am certain that he will be most interested in learning of the history of the original pencil sketch of Lincoln made at Gettysburg. He will advise you regarding it at a later date.

Very truly yours,

Margaret Moellering
Secretary to Dr. Warren

mm

Thorp

March 19, 1948

The Honorable Harold Knutson
Committee on Ways and Means
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Knutson:

We are quite familiar with the story of Colonel Thorp's art work and have often run across pieces of his handiwork.

However, our policy here at the Lincoln Foundation with respect to illustrative material such as original paintings and drawings has been to reject them in favor of interpretations by modern artists, of which we have about twenty different oil paintings, so I think possibly we will continue this program.

I regret indeed that such funds as are accessible must be used for continuing certain phases of our constructive Lincoln story.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

12 - - - THORP

CARL A. OLSON
PRESIDENT
G. C. OLSON
VICE-PRESIDENT

INSURANCE LOANS

CAROL KELLING
SECRETARY
ELLIOTT 6144-5

SEATTLE REALTY CO.

BUSINESS BROKERS
5502 WHITE-HENRY-STUART BLDG.
4TH AND UNION
SEATTLE 1, WASH.

November 18 1952

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln Life Foundation,
Lincoln Life Insurance Company,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Doctor Warren:

Your Seattle Manager, my old friend Ed Small, tells me that I should submit to you something I consider a rare bargain for you. It is a portrait of Abraham Lincoln done by Colonel Thorp. Colonel Thorp did this work from several sketches he did of Mr. Lincoln during Mr. Lincoln's lifetime. The family have newspaper clippings that at one time they even stopped a train long enough for Colonel Thorp to do a sketch of Mr. Lincoln. There are other clippings and papers in the family book which would be included with the painting.

The reason I called Ed for my friend is that I immediately suggested that your Advertising Department very well spent $5,000 a year for less valuable space than you would have in the Lincoln Museum by means of a plaque showing that the portrait is on loan to the Museum from the Lincoln Life Insurance Company. If it is not hung properly you could, of course, always withdraw it.

Since it has now hung there for forty years it is presumed that they will continue to want it there.

Am enclosing copies of letters recently received from the Superintendent of the Lincoln Museum.

If you are interested in purchasing the portrait, together with the newspaper clippings, for $5,000 please advise me at once. This price does not include the sketches. My friend will soon leave for Hollywood to try to sell the story of the incident, together with the original sketches.

As an old friend of Ed Small and your Company I considered I was doing you a favor to pass this on to you immediately.

Yours very truly,

Carl A. Olson

CAO:HH

ENCLS.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Parks
Washington 25, DC

Oct 30 1952

Mr. Albert M. Lind
Box 303
Nisswa, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Lind:

This is to acknowledge your letter of recent date stating that Mrs. Anna Benson, of Backus, Minnesota, had appointed you and John W. Shaffer has her agents to sell the portrait of Abraham Lincoln, by Freeman Thorp. This portrait is on loan to the Lincoln Museum.

Our records at the Lincoln Museum show that the Freeman Thorp portrait was placed on loan by Miss Anne A. Thorp. It will be necessary before any action can be taken concerning this portrait, that we be furnished evidence that Mrs. Anne Benson and Miss Anne A. Thorp are one and the same person. Further, it will be necessary for us to have authorization from the owner of the portrait. I am sure that you can appreciate the importance of this requirement. The Lincoln Museum gives equal care and protection to items loaned to the museum as it does to those presented to the collection.

The Lincoln Museum does not know of anyone at the present time that would be willing to pay $5,000 for this portrait with a view of presenting it to the museum.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Frank T. Gartside

Frank T. Gartside
Assistant Superintendent

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Parks
Washington 25, D C

Nov 13 1952

Mr. Albert M. Lind,
306 Blanchard
Seattle, Washington

Dear Mr. Lind:

We have received from Mrs. Anna Benson of Backus, Minnesota, the statement which we felt necessary establishing the fact that it was she that presented on loan the portrait of Abraham Lincoln, painted by her father. We also received from her a statement that you and Mr. Shaffer had been appointed as her agents to sell the portrait.

During the calendar year 1951, 123,528 people attended the Lincoln Museum, and thus far during 1952, 134,710 people have attended.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Frank T. Gartside

Frank T. Gartside
Assistant Superintendent

November 25, 1952

Mr. Carl A. Olson
Seattle Realty Company
5502 White-Henry-Stuart Building
4th and Union Streets
Seattle 1, Washington

My dear Mr. Olson:

Thank you very much for calling to our attention the interesting work by Colonel Thorp which is quite familiar to us.

I regret that our program for acquiring outstanding paintings does not include portraits made by artist contemporary with Lincoln's day. We are more interested in having modern artists interpret certain episodes in Lincoln's life so we would not be interested in the acquisition of the painting which you called to our attention.

Very truly yours,

Director

LAW:jaf
Dr. Louis A. Warren

MAIN OFFICE
Hamburg, Iowa 51640
712-382-1212

BRANCH OFFICE
Riverton, Iowa 51650
712-387-2671

Dr. Mark Neely
Lincoln Library
Box 1110
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801

9/11/85

Good morning:

Thanks for fielding my phone call last Wednesday.

Enclosed are 8"X12" glossies of the four John Falter oils of Abe Lincoln that we discussed. There is some reflection in the photos and the colors in the originals are more vibrant. Each work is approx. 32" X 48" and the overall size with the frame is approx. 39" X 55". The frames are distressed-finished barn siding neatly done. Three are on canvas and one is on board.

Also enclosed is a short history of Mr. Falter's professional life. As I mentioned he was a boyhood friend of my fathers in Falls City, Nebraska. Some of his Sat. Eve. Post covers have recently sold in the $15M to $20M range.

My father commissioned the four paintings at about the time 3-M Company in Minnesota did so for the Bicentennial. They are well researched and we have several letters from Mr. Falter concerning this. The 3-M Company used the Big-Muddy painting in a TV special in 1975 and Mr. Falter had some lithos made from the one of Lincoln in the General Store.

Also enclosed is a snap-shot of the Lincoln portriat by Col. Freeman Thorpe. This is one of two Lincoln portraits known by Thorpe who did many portraits in the 1860's. The other Thorpe painting of Lincoln hangs in the Corridor of the Senate Wing of the National Capitol in Washington. A newspaper article about Thorpe is enclosed.

The prices for the paintings are as follows:

1. All four Falters (sold only as a group) $80,000.00 for the set with $40,000 down and $40,000 by 1/15/86 with no interest.

2. The Thorpe oil of Lincoln $24,000 with $12,000 and $12,000 by 1/15/86.

We would like to see them stay in the Middlewest...thanks for your consideration.

James T. Weaver, Pres.
712-382-1212

Col. Freeman Thorpe Painting Donated to Pequot Lakes School

An interesting bit of history concerns Col. Freeman Thorp, portrait artist and photographer....

Col. Thorp was the grandfather of Joseph Heald, of Pequot Lakes, who is likewise adept in painting, and whose home reflects his intense interest in painting as a hobby. Mr. Heald's mother, Sarah Thorp Heald was a graduate of Corchoran Art School in Washington, D.C. and was well known for her paintings.

Freeman Thorp, veteran of the Civil War, served three terms in the Ohio House of Representatives and was Speaker of the House in that State. For his services in the Ohio National Guard during the Cincinnati riots of 1870, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel. During his tenure in office, he likewise was active in the campaign of President Garfield.

Col. Freeman Thorp, who had his studio in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. during the time of President Grant, has on record, over 600 portraits including House and Senate notables. Other people of interest whom he had portraits of were Buffalo Bill, Horace Greeley, Andrew Carnegie, and several governors.

Crow Wing County's claim to Freeman Thorp began when he purchased 1500 acres of land from the Gull River Lumber Company, in the Lake Hubert area. This occurred in 1895, and it is interesting to note that his descendant, Joseph Heald, has continued this great man's talents to this day.

The painting of President Garfield, done around 1879, was given to the school by Joe Heald and his son John.

COLONEL FREEMAN THORP'S PAINTINGS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Abraham Lincoln	Corridor of Senate Wing in National Capitol
John Forsythe	Secretary of State, located in the State Department
Alonzo Taft	Justice Building
J.S. Morton	Secretary of Agriculture Located in Agricultural Building
John Sherman	Bureau of Engraving
Salmon P. Chase	Supreme Court Building
Joseph Cannon	Speaker of House of Representatives. We pre- [illegible] to be in Library of

PEQUOT LAKES, MN.

OLDTIMERS... STORIES OF OUR PIONEERS

BY CARL A. ZAPFFE

Freeman Woodcock Thorp

Nationally-known artist settled Clark-Hubert

Colonel Freeman Thorp is best known to area oldtimers as the talented, energetic, and nationally renowned artist who built "The Castle" atop a hill off the southeastern shore of Clark Lake.

But there is much more to Thorp than just that, so far as our Lake Region history is concerned, and indeed Nisswa itself. When Helen Schwartz published her biography of Thorp in **The Country Echo** beginning October 2, 1980, it ran for 15 issues; and those wishing to learn more about this remarkable man should read that seminal work. The present writer has even more to say, following a special research conducted in Washington where the Architect of the Capitol has an enormous file on Thorp and his paintings, and also for having been a close personal friend of Thorp's grandson Joseph Heald for over 60 years.

Thorp's birthdate is usually given as

Abraham Lincoln on his way to Washington, had to stop for some mechanical repairs at the local shop. The townspeople literally went wild; but in the melee, Thorp managed to crowd close to the train's rear platform when Lincoln came out to say a few words. Automatically his hands shifted to his coat pocket; out came the pad and pencil; whereupon the young man produced a pencil sketch of that historic countenance which would itself become historic.

However, "Freem" -- as he was usually called -- was more interested in horsemanship. On the 14th of April of that same year 1861, the shocking news flashed throughout the country that Fort Sumter had surrendered. Not yet 17 years of age, and knowing he would never get his parents' permission, Freem jumped on his favorite steed, galloped to Cleveland, and enlisted as a Scout in Company D of the Calvary in the Ohio State Militia.

PEQUOT LAKES, MN.

OLDTIMERS... STORIES OF OUR PIONEERS

BY CARL A. ZAPFFE

Freeman Woodcock Thorp

Nationally-known artist settled Clark-Hubert

Colonel Freeman Thorp is best known to area oldtimers as the talented, energetic, and nationally renowned artist who built "The Castle" atop a hill off the southeastern shore of Clark Lake.

But there is much more to Thorp than just that, so far as our Lake Region history is concerned, and indeed Nisswa itself. When Helen Schwartz published her biography of Thorp in **The Country Echo** beginning October 2, 1980, it ran for 15 issues; and those wishing to learn more about this remarkable man should read that seminal work. The present writer has even more to say, following a special research conducted in Washington where the Architect of the Capitol has an enormous file on Thorp and his paintings, and also for having been a close personal friend of Thorp's grandson Joseph Heald for over 60 years.

Thorp's birthdate is usually given as June 14, 1844; but our research in Washington flushed out an old paper in Thorp's own handwriting showing it to be June 16. He had a way of writing "6" with such a high and careless loop as to confuse one into reading it "4".

Pandanarum was the strange name of the little settlement off the south shore of Lake Erie which would later become Geneva. Equally strange in points of name was the marriage in that town of one Dennis **Thorp** to a Clarice **Throop;** but strangest of all were the circumstances connected with the birth of their fourth child.

For after fielding Jason, Henry, and Ruby, and when Clarice again was bulging with No. 4, the "Squire" -- as Dennis was called because of his position as Justice of the Peace -- was called away for several days on business. Before leaving, he arranged for a midwife to be in attendance if things got hot before he returned.

And this is exactly what happened.

Worse, when the agonizing call came, it was not only in the middle of an absolutely miserable and stormy night, but the midwife herself was too sick to get out of bed. Certainly the three little children would be of no help.

But lo! and behold: Just at the critical moment, a disheveled and rain-soaked "circuit rider" knocked on the door. When the children rather hesitantly let him in, this astonished man found himself confronting a quite unexpected job; nor was there time for either reflection or debate. So he bravely stepped forth, washed his hands and arms with soap at the sink -- and did it.

When Dennis returned home several days later, his shock at learning of this experience was only outmatched by his delight over finding himself once again the father of a fine and healthy son.

"We'll name him Aaron for Dad!" he stated in great glee.

"No we won't!" declared Clarice, with a firmness that was gentle but rather striking.

"And why not?" inquired the astonished Squire.

"Because his name is **Freeman Woodcock!"** she replied. For that was the name of the gallant "midwife" who had miraculously appeared out of Stormy Nowhere in her very moment of dire need. In later years, Freeman always freely admitted to his middle name, and indeed took a sort of pride in it; but beware the person who used it!

From there on, all of Freeman Woodcock's life was equally marked by the unusual. Already at age 12 his artistic talents were attracting attention. This he came by naturally. For his mother's grandfather was a brother of the French artist Ravelle; and the grandfather himself once painted a lady at the Court of Versailles which made her so much more beautiful than the Queen that he had to flee the country.

On the 15th of February 1861, the atmosphere became electric in the little town of Geneva when a train, passing through and carrying none less than Abraham Lincoln on his way to Washington, had to stop for some mechanical repairs at the local shop. The townspeople literally went wild; but in the melee, Thorp managed to crowd close to the train's rear platform when Lincoln came out to say a few words. Automatically his hands shifted to his coat pocket; out came the pad and pencil; whereupon the young man produced a pencil sketch of that historic countenance which would itself become historic.

However, "Freem" -- as he was usually called -- was more interested in horsemanship. On the 14th of April of that same year 1861, the shocking news flashed throughout the country that Fort Sumter had surrendered. Not yet 17 years of age, and knowing he would never get his parents' permission, Freem jumped on his favorite steed, galloped to Cleveland, and enlisted as a Scout in Company D of the Calvary in the Ohio State Militia. Because of his obvious excellence in handling a horse, no questions were pressed regarding his age.

Sent into the Ozarks of Missouri, Thorp one day pulled into an apparent watering hole with his dust-laden and thirsty outfit. To his astonishment and dismay, several of the men, instead of waiting for their horses to decide whether the water was potable, feverishly dismounted and rushed toward the pool. Since there was no time to discuss the situation, Thorp kicked his horse into a furious gallop to get ahead of these men, swung around and covered them with his revolver just as they were about to bend over and drink:

"STOP! Or I'll shoot!" This gave him the delay needed to explain what they were about to do; and their horses soon agreed that Thorp was right.

As his strange young manly luck would have it, two horsemen ranging far ahead of some other unit in the Ozarks happened to be passing at this very time; and they sauntered over to inquire into Thorp's rather shocking posture of threatening to shoot his own men. One of them was obviously a Colonel; and observing his own horses' reaction to the poisonous water hole he explained:

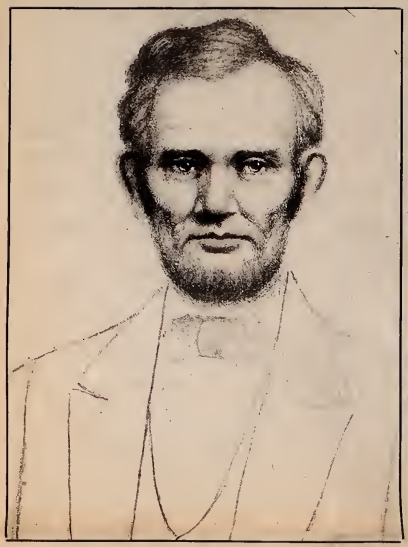
"The man is right! That stuff is lethal!"

Approaching Thorp more closely, this Colonel's stocky companion, chewing an unlighted cigar, asked Thorp his name. When Thorp identified himself, this companion turned to the other and said:

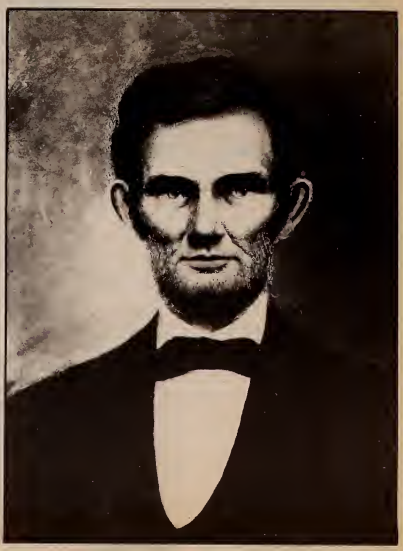
"There's officer stuff in him. He's got guts to jump regulations when it's necessary. I'll remember him!"

And this he did. The companion's name was Ulysses Simpson Grant.

FREEMAN WOODCOCK THORP, nationally famous artist who, for the sake of his son's health, pioneered the Clark-Hubert Lake area. (Courtesy Joseph G. Heald.)



THORP'S FAMOUS PENCIL SKETCH made of Abraham Lincoln while he was presenting his historic Gettysburg Address. Thorp was standing only 15 feet away; and it was this sketch which he used in later years to paint the portrait of this President which was selected by the United States Government for hanging in the National Capitol. (Courtesy Joseph G. Heald.)



PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN. This is the portrait which Thorp painted in 1879, and has been hanging in the main corridor of the second floor of the Senate Wing in the National Capitol. (Courtesy Architect of the Capitol.)

During the great War Between the States, Thorp was involved officially with the military, and unofficially with the "underground railroad" which secretly transported negroes to safety and freedom in the north. Then he was felled, not by bullets, but by malaria; and his life was probably saved by a woman who, despite having two sons in the Confederate Army, placed Thorp and his five companions in the loft of her barn where they were tended by an old negro. Her reasoning, in answer to a question by Thorp, was that if something similar happened to her own sons, perhaps somebody would do the same for them.

When finally able to get out on his own, though still in a very weak condition, Thorp decided to go to his Colonel and request discharge. Instead he received a visit from an aide to General Grant with the request to attend upon him immediately at his field headquarters. In those days the events of war were touch and go; and waves of dissatisfaction were washing the country, many people clamoring for General Grant's removal. The frightful Battle of Gettysburg was now in full swing. Grant riveted the two men with his powerful gaze and said:

"I'm taking a big gamble on you two; but I believe you both know how to hold your tongue and obey orders. Here is a letter that must get into the hands of Secretary of War Staunton at Washington, come hell or high water. Neither you nor anyone else will know its contents; and before allowing it to fall into other hands, destroy it!"

When this assignment was completed, Staunton--astounded upon learning that the two of them had alone carried the letter so far through the highly disturbed countryside, asked what favor he might do them; and Thorp, having just heard that the President was about to visit Gettysburg and make an address, requested that he be allowed to attend. Not only was this granted, but Thorp found himself standing within 15 feet of Lincoln as he presented that memorable Gettysburg Address. And once again, as 3 years before, out came his pencil as he studied the classic face.

In later years of peace when Grant was no longer head of the Union Army, but President of the United States, Thorp exchanged horsemanship for art, and returned to his earlier love of painting. His rise was meteoric. For his beginnings with Ohioans quickly led him to painting portraits of men in the United States Senate; and because of his wartime contacts with men of national stature, he was soon painting the portraits of Grant himself and Grant's whole family. We shall reserve for discussion elsewhere the incredible story and record of his numerous paintings, letting it suffice here to say that the only portrait of Abraham Lincoln which hangs in our National Capitol today is Thorp's.

In final total, his paintings topped 600; three of his portraits of five different presidents currently hang in the National Capitol, along with uncounted likenesses of members of Cabinet, Senate, House; and the list of names of those who sat for him reads like an all-American "Who's Who". The great scope of his works then tails right down into our own area to include such Minnesota notables as Cyrus Northrup of the University of Minnesota; Charles A. Pillsbury, T.B. Walker, and Dorilus Morrison whose logging interests literally shaved the entire face of the State; and Judge George W. Holland, a notable pioneer in Brainerd's early history. In the present writer's opinion, the finest of all his works is the self-portrait which hangs today on the wall in the home of his grandson Joseph Heald in Pequot Lakes.

Even more interesting to our local Nisswa history is that Thorp painted a copy of his historic Lincoln portrait and sold it to R.F.B. "Brownie" Cote in 1924, when Cote took over the old Blake Camp for Boys on the west shore of Hubert Lake. Cote hung the great likeness of the great man over the fireplace in the Camp's great hall: as of July 9, 1926 he officially changed the name of the outfit to Camp Lincoln for Boys, Inc. -- consistently rated by the National Camping Association as one of the top, if not the top, outfits of its kind in the entire country.

History's tapestries are woven from the lives of people. In this weekly series of brief essays concerning the Nisswa Centennial, written exclusively for The Country Echo and scheduled to run into the summer months, the purpose is to view our historical background in terms of biographies of our pioneers. If you have photographs or further information on the people we discuss, please write the author, Carl A. Zapffe, or contact the editor.

Washington flushed out an old paper in Thorp's own handwriting showing it to be June 16. He had a way of writing "6" with such a high and careless loop as to confuse one into reading it "4".

Pandanarum was the strange name of the little settlement off the south shore of Lake Erie which would later become Geneva. Equally strange in points of name was the marriage in that town of one Dennis **Thorp** to a Clarice **Throop;** but strangest of all were the circumstances connected with the birth of their fourth child.

For after fielding Jason, Henry, and Ruby, and when Clarice again was bulging with No. 4, the "Squire" -- as Dennis was called because of his position as Justice of the Peace -- was called away for several days on business. Before leaving, he arranged for a midwife to be in attendance if things got hot before he returned.

And this is exactly what happened.

Worse, when the agonizing call came, it was not only in the middle of an absolutely miserable and stormy night, but the midwife herself was too sick to get out of bed. Certainly the three little children would be of no help.

But lo! and behold: Just at the critical moment, a disheveled and rain-soaked "circuit rider" knocked on the door. When the children rather hesitantly let him in, this astonished man found himself confronting a quite unexpected job; nor was there time for either reflection or debate. So he bravely stepped forth, washed his hands and arms with soap at the sink -- and did it.

When Dennis returned home several days later, his shock at learning of this experience was only outmatched by his delight over finding himself once again the father of a fine and healthy son.

FREEMAN WOODCOCK THORP, nationally famous artist who, for the sake of his son's health, pioneered the Clark-Hubert Lake area. (Courtesy Joseph G. Heald.)

"We'll name him Aaron for Dad!" he stated in great glee.

"No we won't!" declared Clarice, with a firmness that was gentle but rather striking.

"And why not?" inquired the astonished Squire.

"Because his name is **Freeman Woodcock!"** she replied. For that was the name of the gallant "midwife" who had miraculously appeared out of Stormy Nowhere in her very moment of dire need. In later years, Freeman always freely admitted to his middle name, and indeed took a sort of pride in it; but beware the person who used it!

From there on, all of Freeman Woodcock's life was equally marked by the unusual. Already at age 12 his artistic talents were attracting attention. This he came by naturally. For his mother's grandfather was a brother of the French artist Ravelle; and the grandfather himself once painted a lady at the Court of Versailles which made her so much more beautiful than the Queen that he had to flee the country.

On the 15th of February 1861, the atmosphere became electric in the little town of Geneva when a train, passing through and carrying none less than handling a horse, no questions were pressed regarding his age.

Sent into the Ozarks of Missouri, Thorp one day pulled into an apparent watering hole with his dust-laden and thirsty outfit. To his astonishment and dismay, several of the men, instead of waiting for their horses to decide whether the water was potable, feverishly dismounted and rushed toward the pool. Since there was no time to discuss the situation, Thorp kicked his horse into a furious gallop to get ahead of these men, swung around and covered them with his revolver just as they were about to bend over and drink:

"STOP! Or I'll shoot!" This gave him the delay needed to explain what they were about to do; and their horses soon agreed that Thorp was right.

As his strange young manly luck would have it, two horsemen ranging far ahead of some other unit in the Ozarks happened to be passing at this very time; and they sauntered over to inquire into Thorp's rather shocking posture of threatening to shoot his own men. One of them was obviously a Colonel; and observing his own horses' reaction to the poisonous water hole he explained:

"The man is right! That stuff is lethal!"

Approaching Thorp more closely, this Colonel's stocky companion, chewing an unlighted cigar, asked Thorp his name. When Thorp identified himself, this companion turned to the other and said:

"There's officer stuff in him. He's got guts to jump regulations when it's necessary. I'll remember him!"

And this he did. The companion's name was Ulysses Simpson Grant.

Thorpe

MADE SKETCHES OF LINCOLN.

Artist Tells of Meeting President in Civil War Days.

Freeman Thorpe in Leslie's.

When the train pulled into Geneva, I was the first to clamber to the platform of the President's car. There stood Lincoln ready to clasp my hand. Then I took my position on the next platform, and began my sketch, while the crowd pushed up to shake his hand. Of course that sketch was rough, but I got the likeness.

Then came the war; I enlisted and served in the 2d Ohio cavalry, fighting in the Shenandoah Valley. My health broke and I was sent on detached duty to Jeffersonville, Ind., to recuperate. When I regained my health, I went on to Washington to rejoin my regiment. That was just before the first anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg. With my precious Geneva sketch of Lincoln, I went to the war department and asked for a furlough to go to Gettysburg and make another sketch of the President, for it had been announced that Mr. Lincoln would speak on that occasion.

I got the furlough, and rode in the same train with the President. I got an audience with him, and showed him my finished drawing, made from the Geneva "shorthand" sketch, and he complimented it. When we arrived at Gettysburg, we found a great crowd there, interested in the scenes of the battle field, rather than in the program of speeches.

Only a comparatively small number of people gathered about the stand to hear the speeches. I stood within fifteen feet of Mr. Lincoln, as he sat on the platform. There I made another sketch. There is a wonderful difference in its expression from that of the Geneva sketch! The lines are deeper; the countenance more grave.

We listened two hours to the oration of Edward Everett, then the President stepped forward, a sheet of paper in his left hand. There he stood, his left foot advanced ahead of his right, and began to speak, gesticulating somewhat with both long arms. The crowd settled down to hear an hour's address, but it was all over in less than three minutes, and the President sat down. There was no applause. The audience was astonished. Three minutes, when they had expected an hour! The meeting silently broke up.

In 1871 I went to Washington with my two Lincoln sketches. They were the only known sketches from life of the martyr President, and that fact interested the senators.

They built a studio for me on the Capitol roof, over the senate wing, and I occupied it for twenty years. When I finished my portrait of Lincoln, the library committee of the senate recommended its purchase, and the senate unanimously voted $2,000 for it. The likeness now hangs in the corridor of the Capitol, next to the senate.

A Northern Ohio Artist.

BY HAL P. DENTON.

Advices from Washington indicate that the resolution of Senator Sherman, providing for the purchase by the government of a new portrait of Lincoln, intended to be hung on the walls of the senate chamber, will be called up within the next week or so. It will be of interest to a large number of persons of a previous generation in northern Ohio to learn that the artist is Freeman Thorp, once a resident of Geneva, and many years ago a representative in the Ohio general assembly from Ashtabula county.

This portrait, painted from several sketches of Lincoln made during his occupancy of the white house, and from a study of practically every picture of the martyred president, is said to be a new depiction, portraying him with an expression of animation not usually seen in Lincoln portraits, and minus the familiar grotesque exaggeration of features accompanying other likenesses.

There is an interesting story in connection with this painting. Forty-eight years ago, certain members of the senate who had been closely associated with Abraham Lincoln, realized that there was no good portrait of him in existence; that there was no noted portrait painter in America in Lincoln's time; that the period of Gilbert Stuart, Sully, Benjamin West, Charles Wilson Peal and Rembrandt Peale had passed with no immediate successor of note; that the only portraits of Lincoln were painted from photographs, and that photography of that day was a thing of crude and distorted features.

In hope of getting a correct portrait, these senators selected a young portrait painter who had known Lincoln and studied him carefully from life. For many years, while painting distinguished men in public life in the national capital, Thorp occupied a studio built for him for this purpose on the roof of the senate wing. The Lincoln portrait has been finished recently and those who have seen it, especially the comparatively few persons who remember the great emancipator in the flesh, pronounce it as unquestionably the most life-like reproduction of his features.

Scores of portraits of former cabinet officers and department officers, members of the United States supreme court, senators and representatives and other men in public life which adorn the walls o public buildings in Washington were painted b Freeman Thorp. Although his name is seldom see in the public prints, he is recognized as one of t foremost portrait painters of the United Stat In recent years he has divided his time betw the national capital and Minnesota, in which st he has a summer home.

A NORTHERN OHIO ARTIST
By Hal P. Denton

Advices from Washington indicate that the resolution of Senator Sherman, providing for the purchase by the government of a new portrait of Lincoln, intended to be hung on the walls of the senate chamber, will be called up within the next week or so. It will be of interest to a large number of persons of a previous generation in northern Ohio to learn that the artist is Freeman Thorp, once a resident of Geneva, and many years ago a representative in the Ohio general assembly from Ashtabula county.

This portrait, painted from several sketches of Lincoln made during his occupancy of the white house, and from a study of practically every picture of the martyred president, is said to be a new depiction, portraying him with an expression of animation not usually seen in Lincoln portraits, and minus the familiar grotesque exaggeration of features accompanying other likenesses.

There is an interesting story in connection with this painting. Forty-eight years ago, certain members of the senate who had been closely associated with Abraham Lincoln, realized that there was no good portrait of him in existence; that there was no noted portrait painters in America in Lincoln's time; that the period of Gilbert Stuart, Sully, Benjamin West, Charles Wilson Peal and Rembrandt Peale had passed with no immediate successor of note; that the only portraits of Lincoln were painted from photographs and that photography of that day was a thing of crude and distorted features.

In hope of getting a correct portrait, these senators selected a young portrait painter who had known Lincoln and studied him carefully from life. For many years, while painting distinguished men in public life in the national capital, Thorp occupied a studio built for him for this purpose on the roof of the senate wing. The Lincoln portrait has

been finished recently and those who have seen it, especially the comparatively few persons who remember the great emancipator in the flesh, pronounce it as unquestionably the most life-like reproduction of his features.

Scores of portraits of former cabinet officers and department officers, members of the United States supreme court, senators and representatives and other men in public life which adorn the walls of public buildings in Washington were painted by Freeman Thorp. Although his name is seldom seen in the public prints, he is recognized as one of the foremost portrait painters of the United States. In recent years he has divided his time between the national capital and Minnesota, in which state he has a summer home.

THORP, FREEMAN DRAWER 19A Artist T.